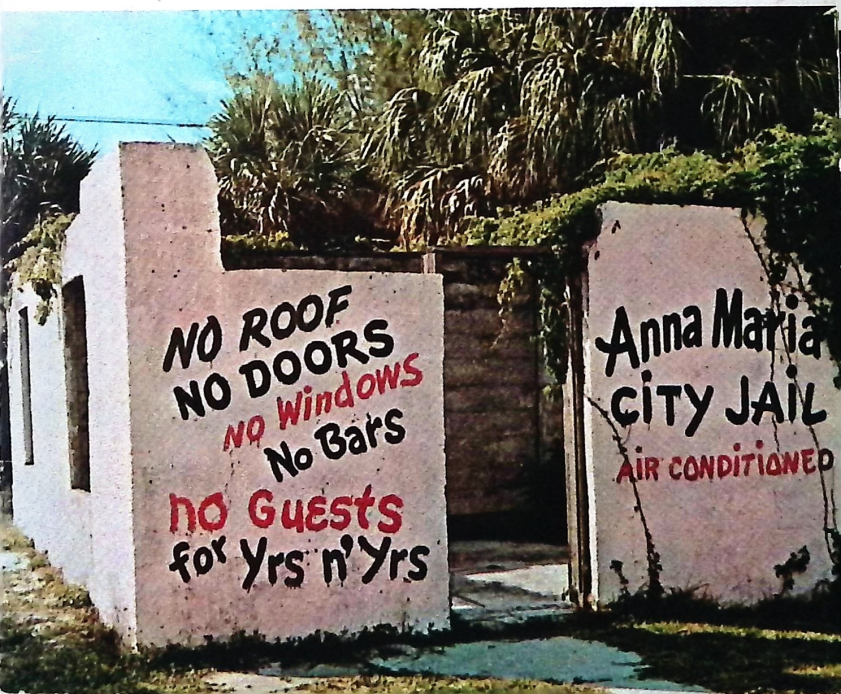


Anna Maria Island
in
Days Past



COVER PHOTO:

The old city jail in Anna Maria, beyond any doubt, the most photographed building on the Island. Built during the boom of the 1920s, it was used as a lock-up only once or twice, because the mosquitoes nearly ate up the one or two men who had the misfortune to be incarcerated, according to Captain Mitch Davis, the city's first mayor. Nearly every day carloads of visitors "discover" the jail, then stop and take pictures of it. A likeness of the old jail has appeared in many newspapers throughout the country and in some national magazines, including the Saturday Evening Post when that publication was in its prime.

Sold by mail only. Send check or money order to S. B. Kimball, P.O. Box 837, Anna Maria, FL 33501. Price \$9.95 postpaid. Florida residents include 40 cents sales tax.

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DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
MARJORIE KIMBALL

BY
STEPHEN AND KATHLEEN KIMBALL

FOREWORD

This booklet is merely a collection of pictures of Anna Maria Island and is intended to be just that. It is NOT in any sense intended to be a history of the Island, but rather a keepsake of interest for anyone who has a feeling for the Island. Preparing this booklet has been a labor of love for its authors.

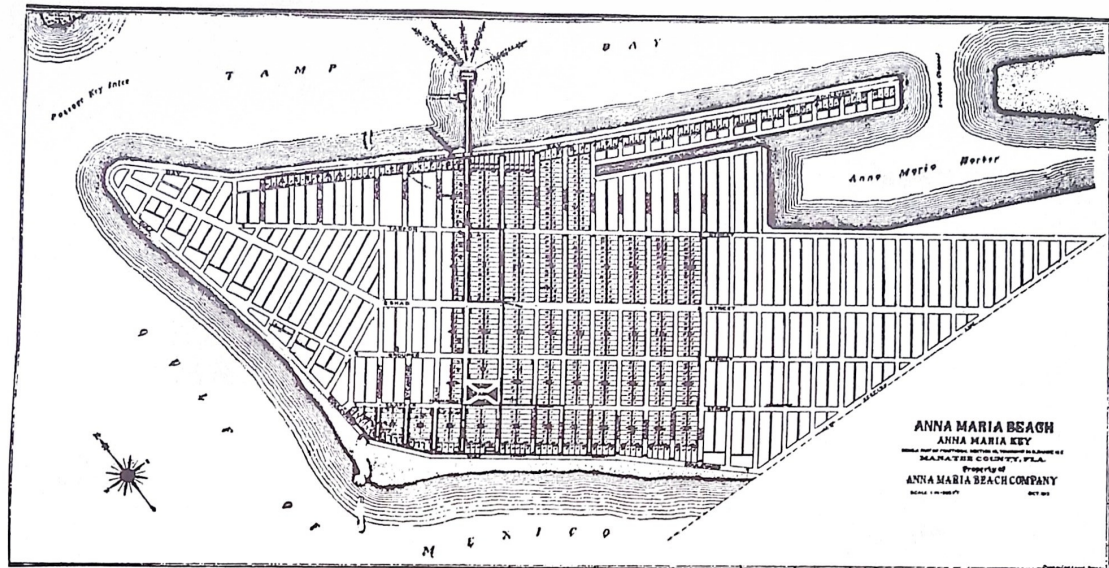
We wish to extend our gratitude to those many people who loaned or gave pictures to the Islander and the Kimballs; copies of some of those pictures are included in the booklet.



"Bastille Day" in Anna Maria — the day the jail burned. From all appearances none of the several men pictured seems to be trying to extinguish the blaze. The part of the jail that didn't burn has since become one of the Island's best known landmarks.



Old Jail, built in 1923 or 1924. Pictured is Captain Mitch Davis, Anna Maria's first mayor.



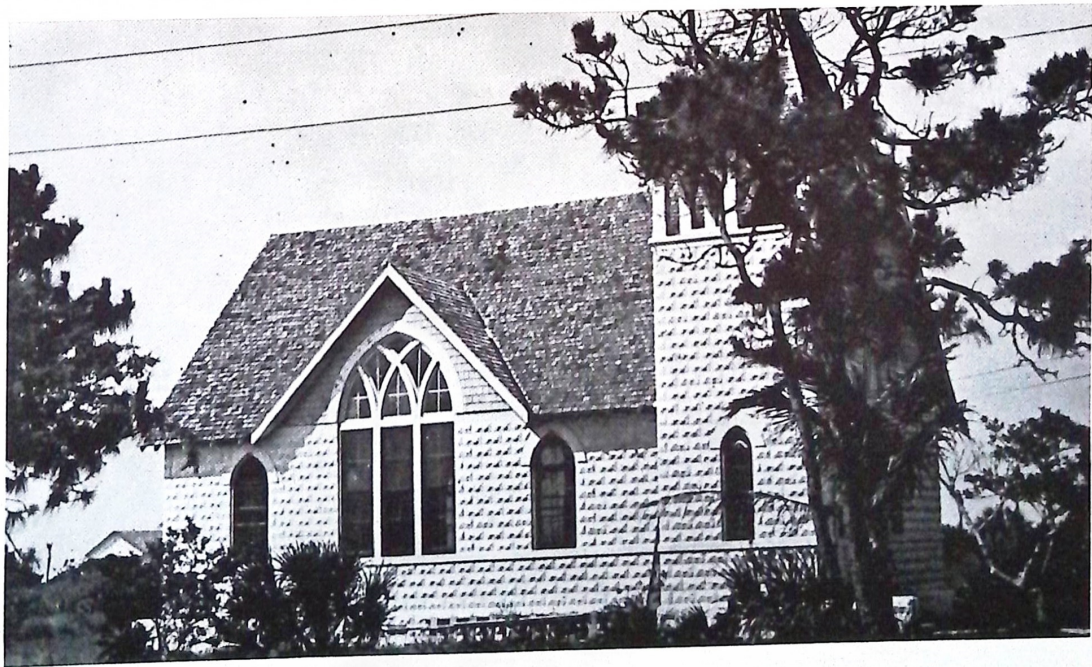
Proposed development of Anna Maria Beach taken from a promotional booklet published by Anna Maria Beach Company, 1913. The greater part of the proposed plan never was carried out.

M E X I C O

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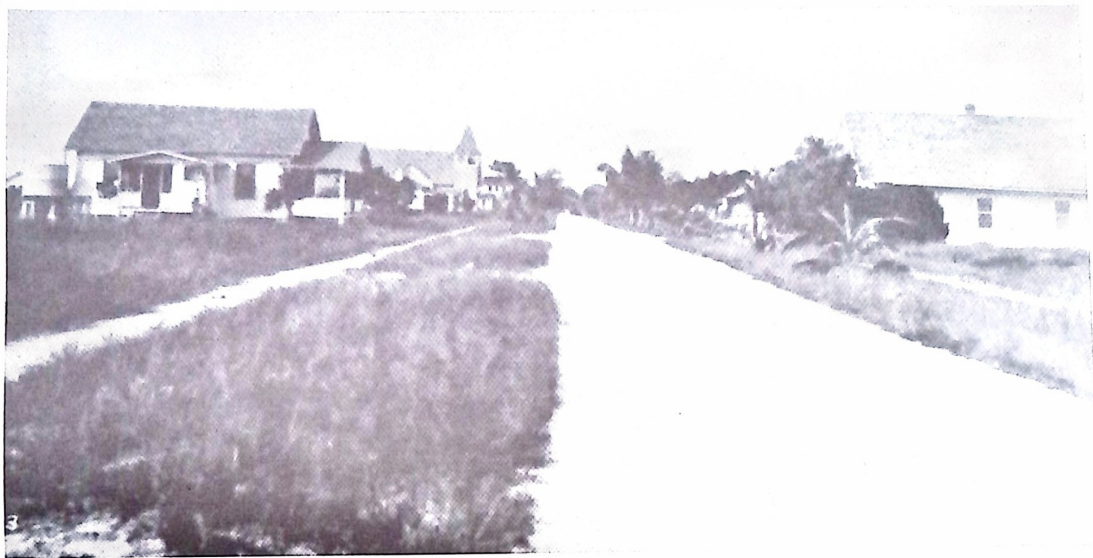


Roser Memorial Church on Pine Avenue in Anna Maria was built by fig newton king, George Roser, in honor of his mother. It was and is non-denominational and today, much enlarged, serves a large congregation.



Side view of Roser Memorial Church as it was some years ago.

9



3

Pine Avenue scene in the early 1900s. Note Roser Memorial Church in background.



Anna Maria landmark. The old community house building, as it appeared in the late 1920s, when it was labeled "Tourist Center". The building which has changed very little outwardly over the years has been used for many purposes: Meeting hall, church, class room and little theater. It is now the permanent home of the Island Players.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
STATE OF FLORIDA
TOWN OF ANNA MARIA
MUNICIPAL BOND

N. 17

\$1000.00

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That the Town of Anna Maria, a Municipal Corporation, in the County of Manatee, State of Florida, hereby acknowledges itself to be indebted and for value received hereby promises to pay to the bearer the sum of One Thousand (\$1,000.00) Dollars on the first day of April, A. D. 1954, with interest thereon at the rate of Six (6%) per cent. per annum, payable semi-annually on the first day of April and the first day of October of each year, both principal and interest of said bonds being payable in gold coin of the United States of America of the present standard weight and fineness or the equivalent thereof, at the Hanover National Bank, in the City of New York, State of New York, provided, however, that the said Town of Anna Maria hereby reserves the option or privilege of redeeming the issue of bonds of which this bond is a part commencing with the last numbered bond, on the interest date after the first day of April, A. D. 1944 upon giving notice at said Hanover National Bank, in the City of New York, State of New York, at least sixty days before the date provided for such redemption.

This Bond is one of a series of bonds aggregating the sum of Forty Thousand (\$40,000.00) Dollars and is issued by the Town of Anna Maria for the following enumerated purposes:

ENUMERATED PURPOSES.

For spring, grading and paving streets
For installing light plant
For installing water works
For erecting public buildings

For drainage
For Town's indebtedness and current expenses
For installing apparatus for fire protection

which has been duly and legally adopted and approved by the majority vote of the duly qualified electors of said Town at an election duly and legally held and conducted as required by law.

It is hereby certified, recited and declared that all acts, conditions and things required to exist, happen and be performed precedent to and in the issuance of this bond, have existed, have happened and been performed in due time, form and manner as required by law, and that the indebtedness of said Town of Anna Maria including this bond, does not exceed any constitutional or statutory limitation, and the full faith, credit and resources of said Town of Anna Maria are hereby irrevocably pledged for the punctual payment of the principal and interest of this bond, as they severally become due.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, The Town of Anna Maria, in the County of Manatee, State of Florida has caused this bond to be sealed with the corporate seal of said Corporation, signed by the Mayor and attested by the Town Clerk, and has caused the coupons hereto annexed to be originally signed or engraved or lithographed with the signatures of said Mayor and Town Clerk, and this bond to be dated the first day of April, 1924.

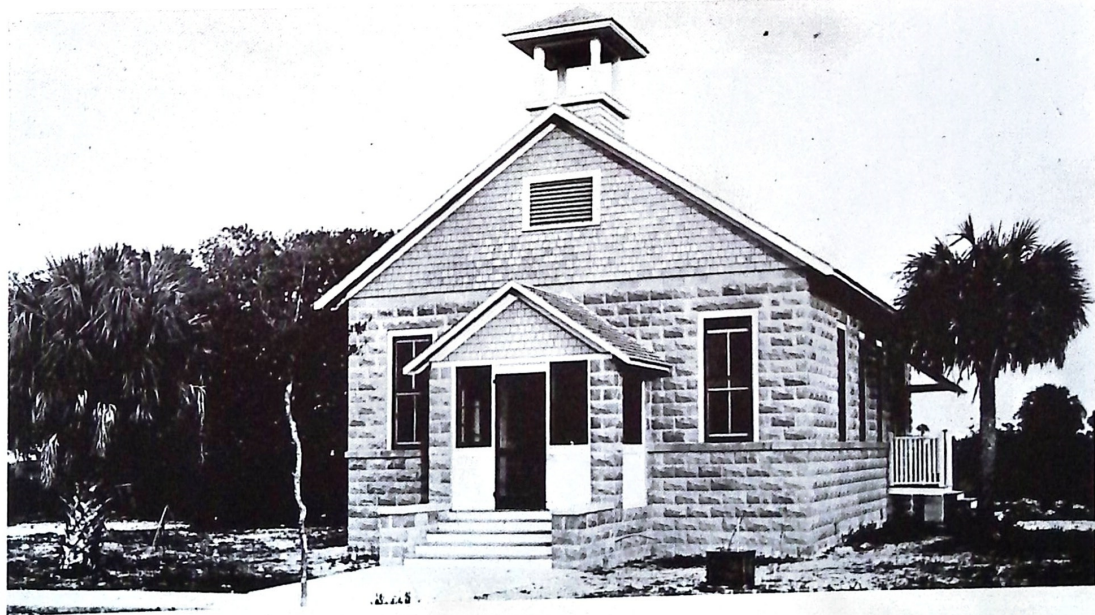
ATTEST:

W. M. Davis
Mayor, Town of Anna Maria, Florida.

Town Clerk of Anna Maria, Florida.
(SEAL)



One of the \$1,000 bonds sold by the town of Anna Maria during the mid 1920s and retired in the mid 1960s. This procedure was typical of what many Florida cities did during the boom days.



Until the early 1950s, when the present Anna Maria School was completed in Holmes Beach, Island children attended school in this ancient building on Magnolia Avenue, Anna Maria, which is now part of the Island Youth Center.



Picture postcard of natural park and spring at Anna Maria Beach, in early 1900s.



Beach scene at Anna Maria City in the days when bathing suits were much more modest than they are today.



Gulf Drive looking north. Building in the background is Anna Maria's venerable community house in 1914.



Old Anna Maria Inn near the Bay end of Pine Avenue.



Holmes Beach Shopping Center and adjacent area in the early 1960s. Note the cedar tree which grew in the north end of the shopping center parking lot.



Pine Avenue, with generous growth of coconut palms. Roser Church is at left of picture which was taken about 1915.



Old Ditmas house on Spring Avenue in Anna Maria in 1923. Mr. Ditmas was well known as the mail carrier on the Island for many years.



Manatee County Beach in mid-1950s before building was enlarged to its present size.



Part of Anna Maria Island in 1916.



16 Homes west of Gulf Drive in Anna Maria in the 1920s. Some of these homes are still being used.



Anna Maria scene in the early 1900s.



Bradenton Beach City Office on First Street North with Mayor P.C. Van Rensselaer and an assistant putting up the sign.



Old Cortez Bridge, first highway link with the Island, shown here as it was being built in 1921. It was the only way to reach the Island except by boat until 1957, when the present bridges from the mainland were opened. Several hundred feet of the old bridge were left standing at the end of Bridge Street in Bradenton Beach and used for a fishing pier. It became so rickety that it was torn down in 1978 and replaced by the present structure.



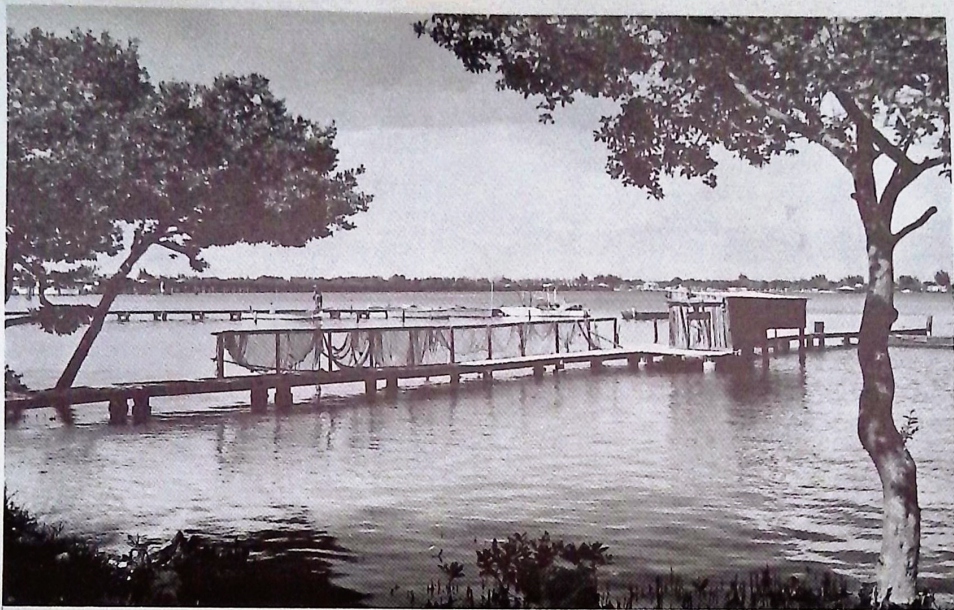
Toward the end of its life, the western end of the old Cortez Bridge.



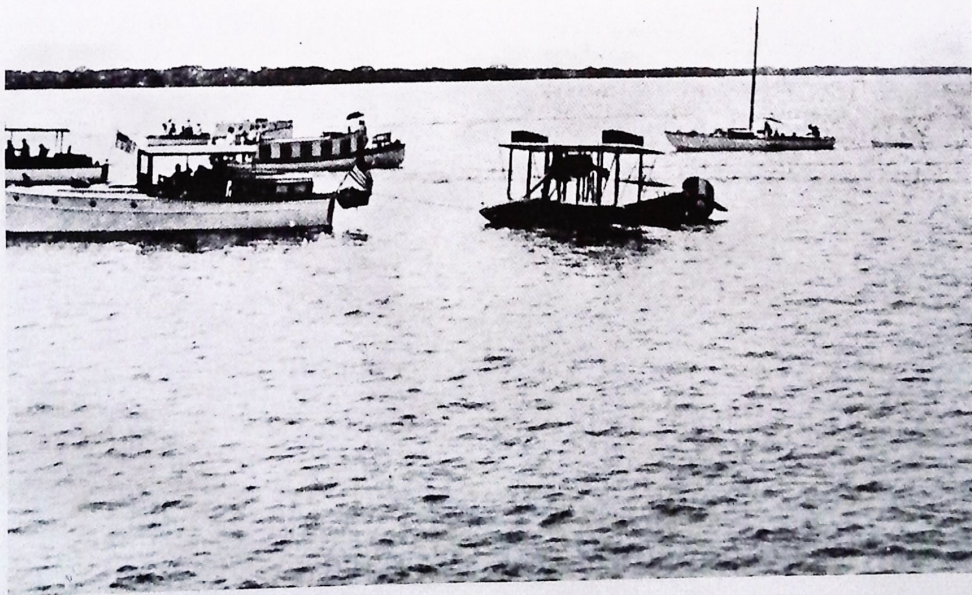
Bayou Marina, now Anna Maria Yacht Club, after being hit by a tornado blowing the roofs off many of the buildings.



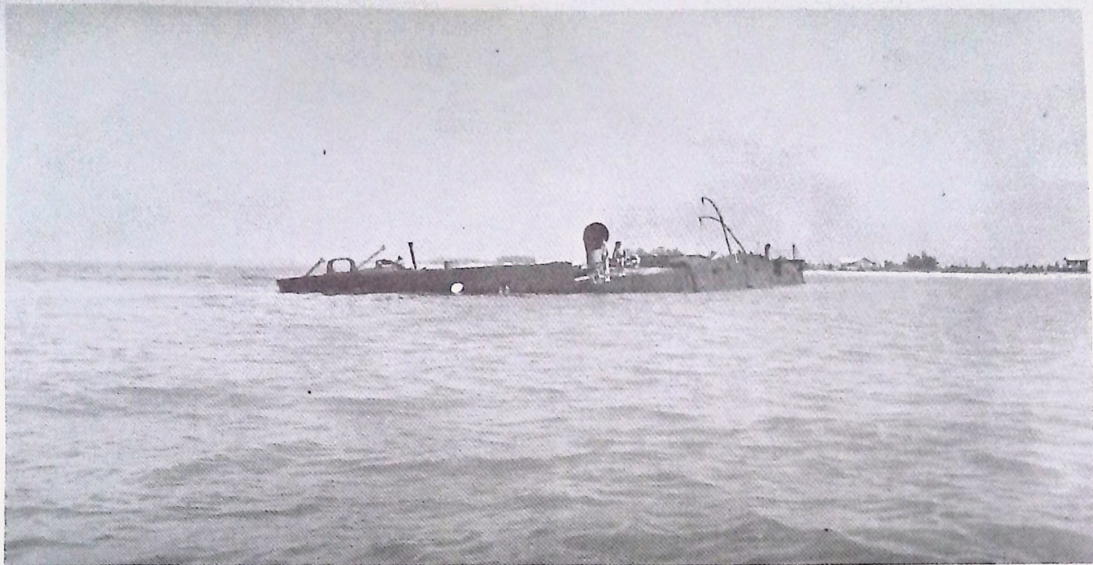
Shambles — boat basin at Bayou Marina after tornado, November 9, 1968.



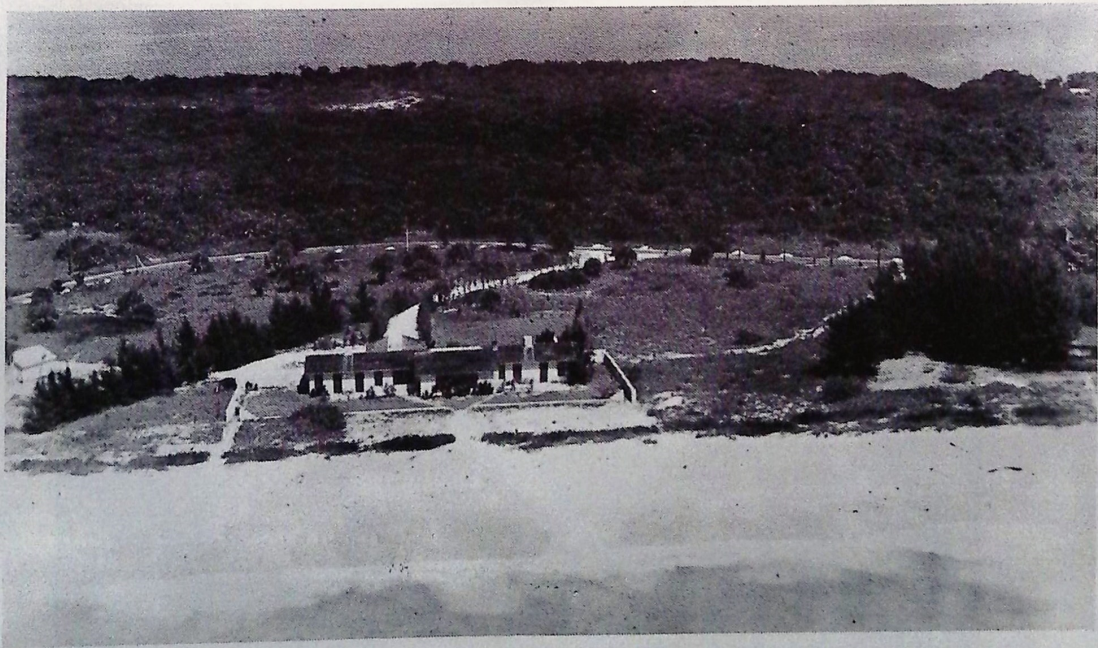
Nets drying on Bayside dock south of Bridge Street in Bradenton Beach. In the background is the old Cortez Bridge, replaced by modern structure in 1957.



27 Speed boats and a sea plane in Palma Sola Bay in 1920s, an area which is now used by water skiers.



The wreck of the old molasses barge "Regina" a few days after it went down in the Gulf off Bradenton Beach in March 1940. The ship settled gradually over the years until today only a small portion protrudes above water west of Trader Jacks and is used by divers as a "target."



Gulfside home of famed political columnist Walter Lippman, which later became the site of the 5400 Gulf Drive apartments, the Island's first condominiums.



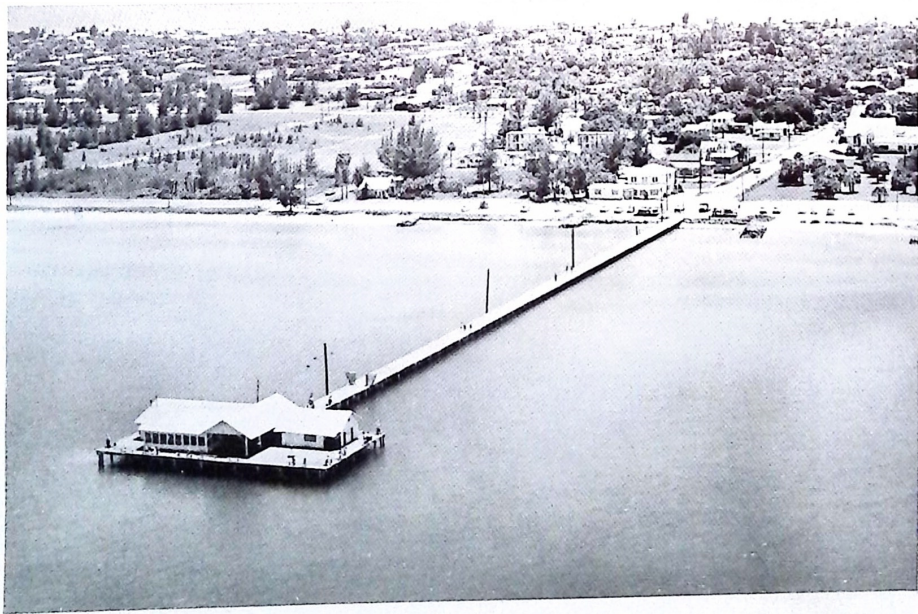
Postcard picture captioned "Basket picnic under the palms, at Anna Maria Beach."



31 A real estate office which occupied the site of the Anchorage building burned down in the 1930s.



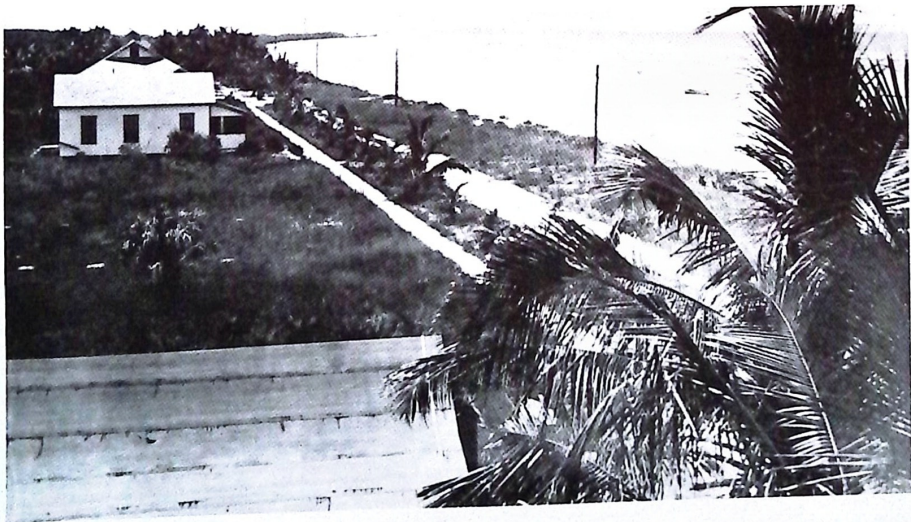
Looking west from the top of Anna Maria Inn in the 1920s. Roser Church was the Inn's next door neighbor. Further west the Gulf is visible.



Landmark — the well known Anna Maria City Pier from the air at the eastern end. There's a good view of the old Anchorage building which has since been torn down.



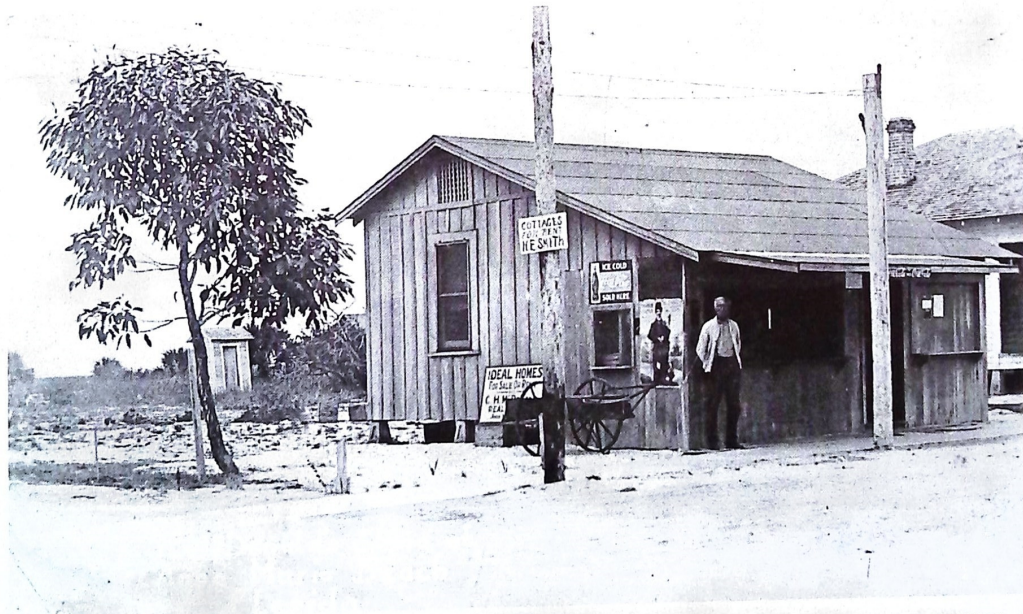
Maple and Gulf Drive, Anna Maria, in the 1920s. House on the extreme left is still occupied and in excellent condition.



Looking north along the Bay from Anglers Inn in Anna Maria in 1945. The lookout tower on the north end of the beach is visible. The tower was manned during World War II to watch out for possible enemies.



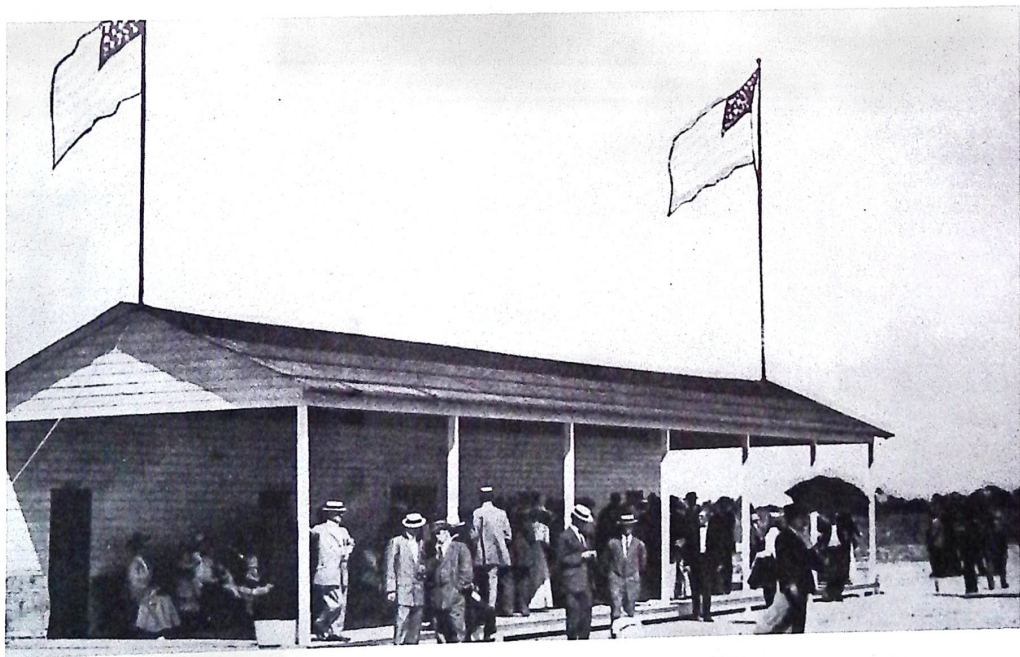
Anna Maria City Pier in 1920 shows several fishermen with their mackerel and kings, plus a few other assorted fish. A successful day's outing in the days when fish were more plentiful than they are today. Sign on side of the building advertises the delights of Anna Maria and its distance from Tampa, St. Pete, Bradenton, Sarasota and other points by boat.



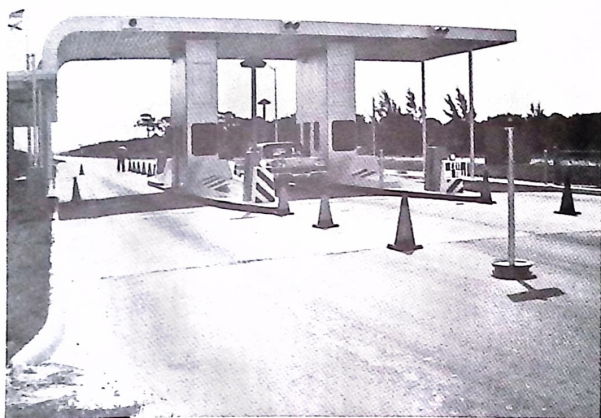
C.H. McDonald pictured in front of his small store at the southwest corner of Gulf Drive and Spring Avenue in 1924 on the site of the present Post Office Plaza. Sign on the end of the building advertises a Charlie Chaplin movie, Coca Cola, and some "ideal" homes which McDonald had for sale. Some of the creature comforts were located in the small structure some distance behind the main building.



Back in the early 1920s when casino had an entirely different meaning than it does today, this picture of the Bradenton Beach Casino taken from the diving platform shows how well the gathering place was patronized. This was located on the Gulf opposite the end of Bridge Street, in Bradenton Beach.



Postcard picture of bathhouse on the Gulf beach in Anna Maria. It was located approximately where the Sand Bar Restaurant stands now.



Toll gate at Anna Maria Bridge (Manatee Avenue) the day the tolls were taken off — April 28, 1964. Before that it cost 30 cents to get onto the Island, but nothing to leave.



The Mira Mar pictured above was sold in 1968 and is now Trader Jacks.



The storm has passed and all is calm.



Passage Key, sometimes referred to as Bird Island, located off the north end of Anna Maria, in 1914. At that time there was a building and a farm on Passage Key, but now the Gulf has eroded the little island to the point where it can hardly be seen at high tide. It is now just a place for the birds.



Sunday visitors to Anna Maria in the early days of the century, walking from the steamboat landing on the Bay to the Gulf beach.



Anna Maria scene in the early 1900s.



Island visitors relaxing on Gulf beach in Anna Maria on a Sunday afternoon in 1914. By today's standards everyone looks overdressed, even the bathers.



One of the oldest structures on the Island — the Anna Maria City Pier in 1914, with a small excursion boat from Tampa docked there. Note the large "cottage" attached to the north side of the pier.



Anna Maria Pier and cottages in 1924. Stretching nearly 800 feet into Tampa Bay, when it also served as a walkway for the two adjacent "cottages." The two cottages later fell into disrepair and were torn down prior to the piers being rebuilt in the 1930s.



Not just one class — but the entire student body at the old Anna Maria Island School on Magnolia Avenue in Anna Maria. Picture probably was taken in the late 1930s or early 1940s.



Not regular mail service to the Island, but an emergency landing here during the 1920s.



Post time! Anna Maria's Bayfront Park provides resting place for area sea gulls.



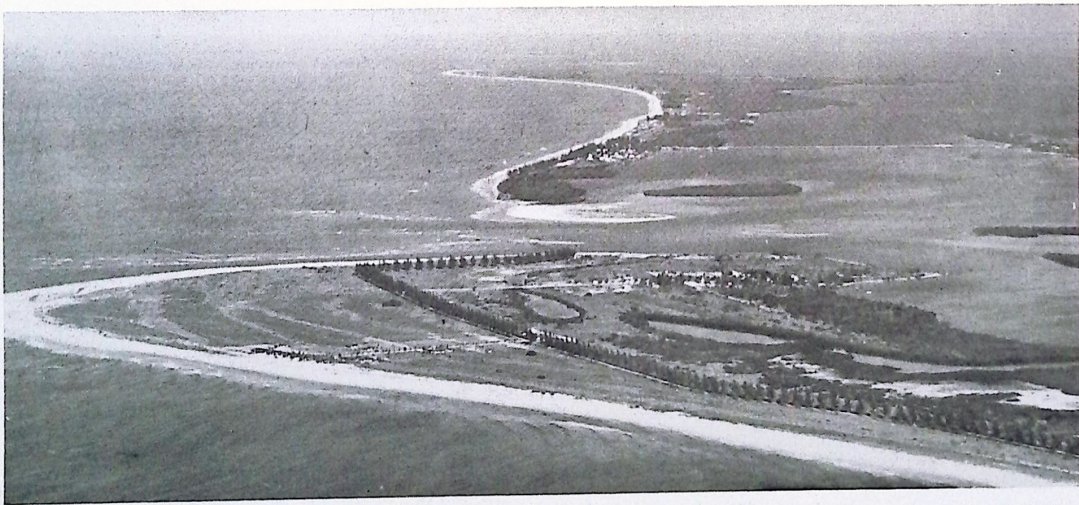
"Sharkey" Holbrook with one of his catches, a white shark over 20 feet long, on the north end of Longboat Key. The creature was one of the catches that Holbrook and his partner used to fuel their



"shark factory" on the south end of Anna Maria Island, in the late thirties and early forties. This is one of the largest sharks ever caught in this area.



A good view of the Island before much development was done, probably during the 1940s.



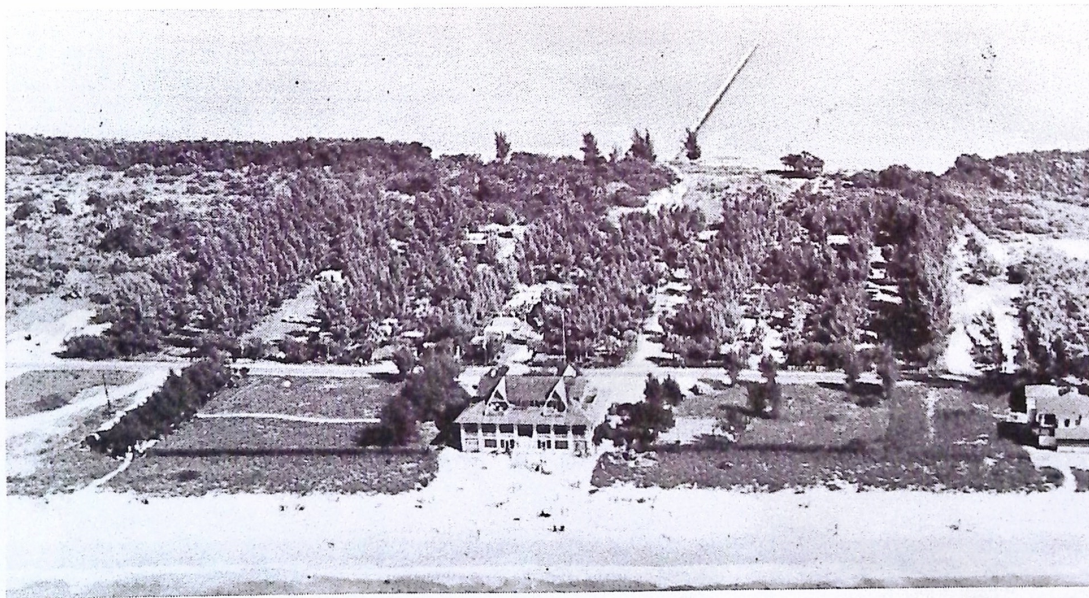
1937 aerial showing the long strip of beach on the northern point of Longboat Key and southern part of Anna Maria Island. Note the row of Australian pines beside Gulf of Mexico Drive on Longboat Key, most of which succumbed to fires set by careless smokers. Note also no Beer Can Island.



Photo from the north end of the Island in 1946 showing very little of present day development, although general outline is much the same as it is today.



Gulf to Bay of Bradenton Beach in the 1940s with the Cove at the left hand side of the picture and Coffee Key far right.



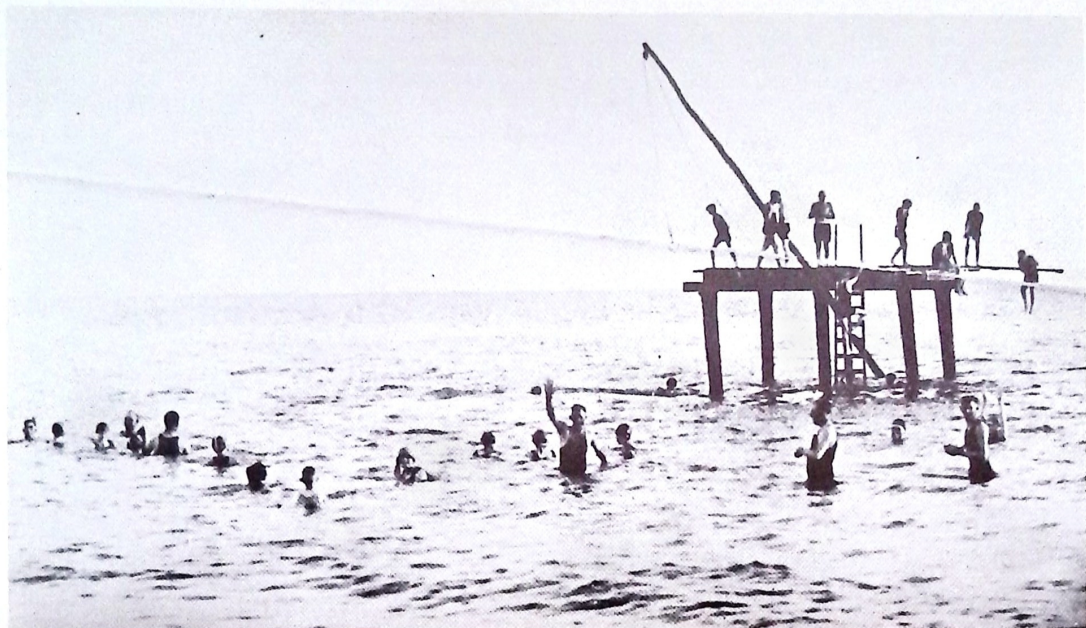
Aerial view of Gulf Park in Bradenton Beach showing the old Gulf Park Hotel in the early 1940s, when it also had a long pier into the Bay. The park is now known as the Sandpiper Mobile Resort.



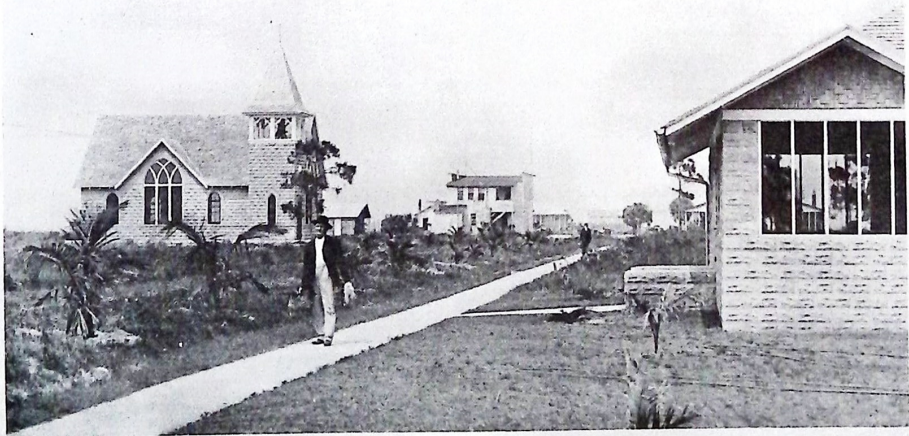
Albion Inn in Cortez in the 1920s, a popular winter resort. It is now a Coast Guard station.



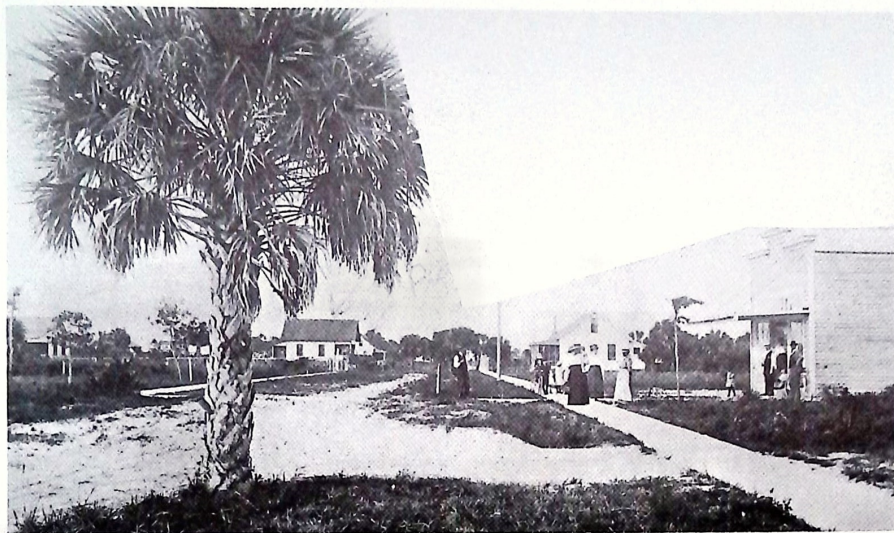
Shark Beach? — Not really, but this was the scene on the morning of January 9, 1960, at the north tip of Anna Maria Island. There were 17 sharks washed up on the beach after being caught in commercial fishing nets with 70,000 pounds of mullet. The fishermen used a shotgun to kill the mullet eating sharks. The shark scene attracted a crowd of people, many of whom took pictures. A woman gave this picture to an Islander employee.



Diving platform in the Gulf opposite the end of Magnolia Avenue in Anna Maria. Most of the platform has disappeared but until recently one post stuck up to show the location.



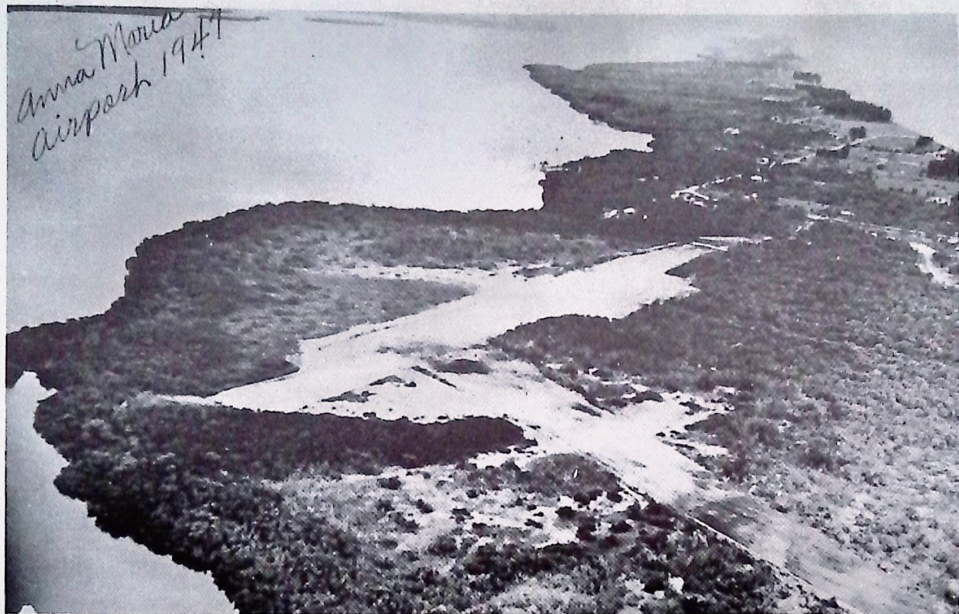
Pine Avenue in the 1920s looking toward the Bay, shows Roser Church as it looked originally. In the background, beyond the church, is the old Anna Maria Inn, which has been gone for many years.



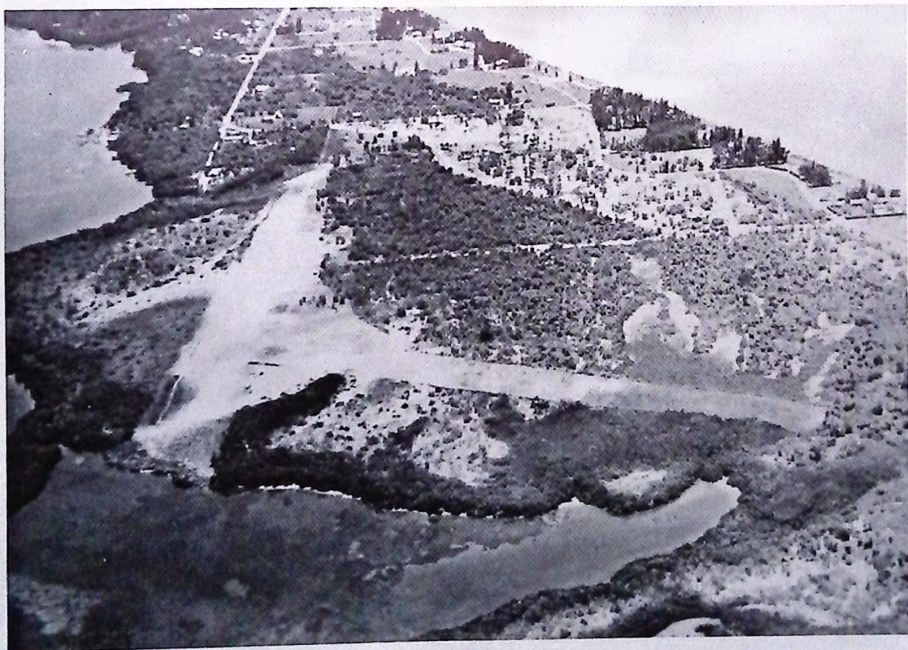
Early scene in Anna Maria City showing store and post office, corner of Spring Avenue and Gulf Drive.



The Virginia, a fishing boat owned by Captain and Mrs. Jim Sage, later owners of the Admiral fleet.



Early view of Holmes Beach Airport (1947) looking toward the south end of the Island.



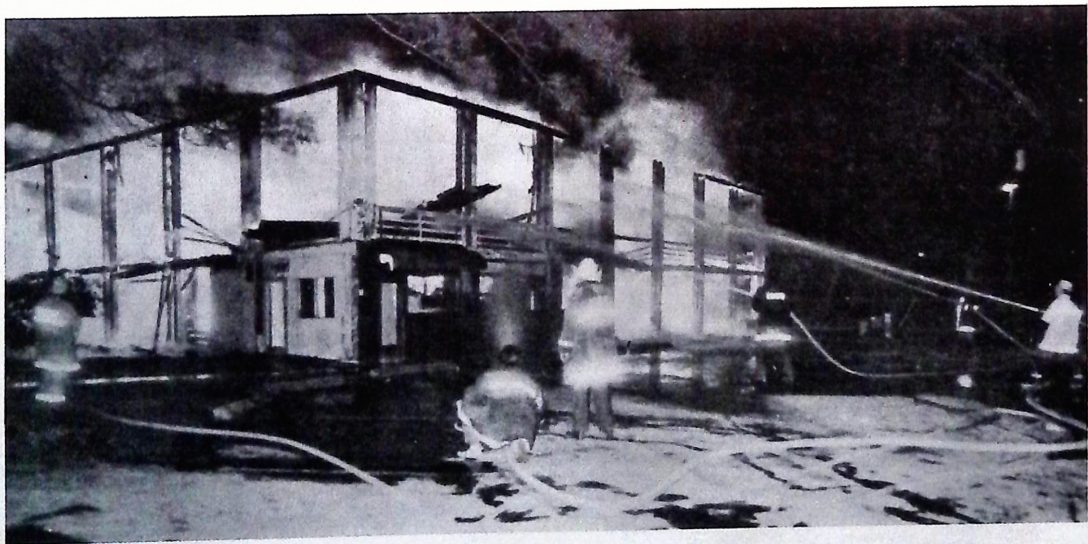
A later view of the airport showing more development on the Island.



Old Gulf Park Hotel — Probably the oldest structure on the Island, taken from the Gulf side of the building before the third floor was removed.



Old Gulf Park Hotel after the third floor was removed.



Spectacular picture as Gulf Park Hotel burns to the ground on Washington's birthday, 1979. For the last few months of its existence the old building was used as a night spot called the "Oar House".



Airport, Holmes Beach.



A holiday gathering at Cortez Beach (Bradenton Beach) following the opening of the old Cortez Bridge in 1922. Mainland residents obviously approved the bridge as they were now able to motor to the Island in their Model T's and other early cars.



Reflections on a misty morn on Anna Maria Island.



Good view of Bradenton Beach and the original Cortez Bridge to the Island. Present Cortez Bridge and Manatee Avenue Bridge being built at this time. Note cars on old bridge and homes along Gulf south of Bridge Street.



Sorting the mail in the old Anna Maria Post Office in the early 1950s.



Another view of women working the mail at the Post Office.



Sketch of old drawbridge on Bay Boulevard. Despite the weights which helped to raise and lower the bridge, the operation of this structure left much to be desired. Sketch of old school house in Anna Maria, both done by Dianne Bell.



Beachcombers on Anna Maria Island in the early 1900s.



Diving platform in the Gulf in Bradenton Beach from which picture of Casino was taken. The platform seemed well patronized, especially by the younger set.



Excellent aerial view of Bradenton Beach in the early 1950s, showing old Cortez Bridge, the only access to the Island, and the undeveloped south end of the Island (now Coquina Beach) with a breakthrough from Gulf to Bay. Note shadow of sunken molasses ship in lower right corner.



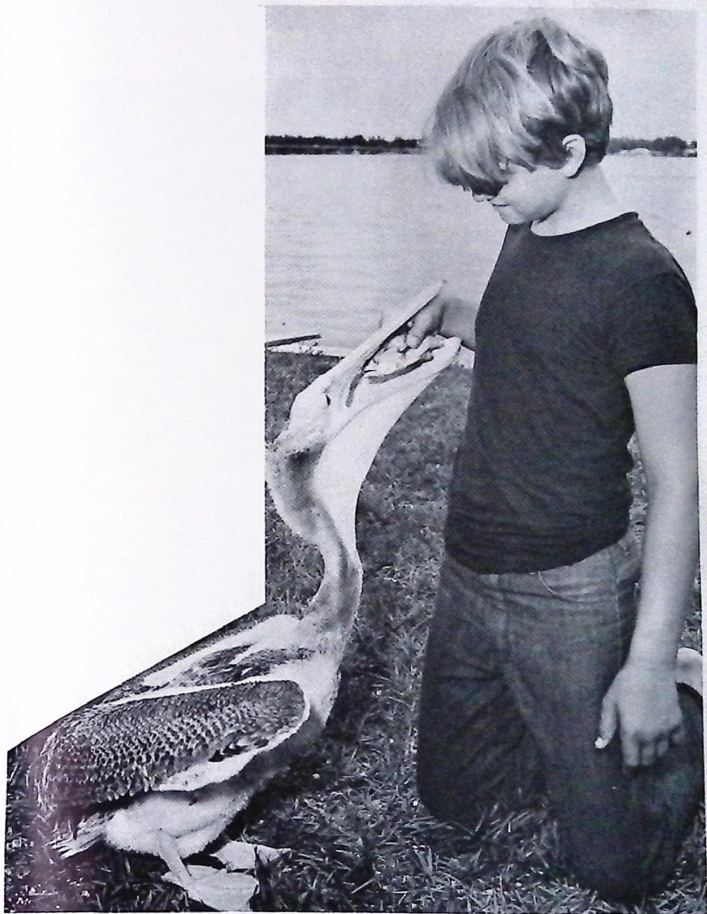
Before Anna Maria and Longboat Key were joined by the bridge in 1958, and Beer Can Island was building up. Longboat Key stretches away to the south.



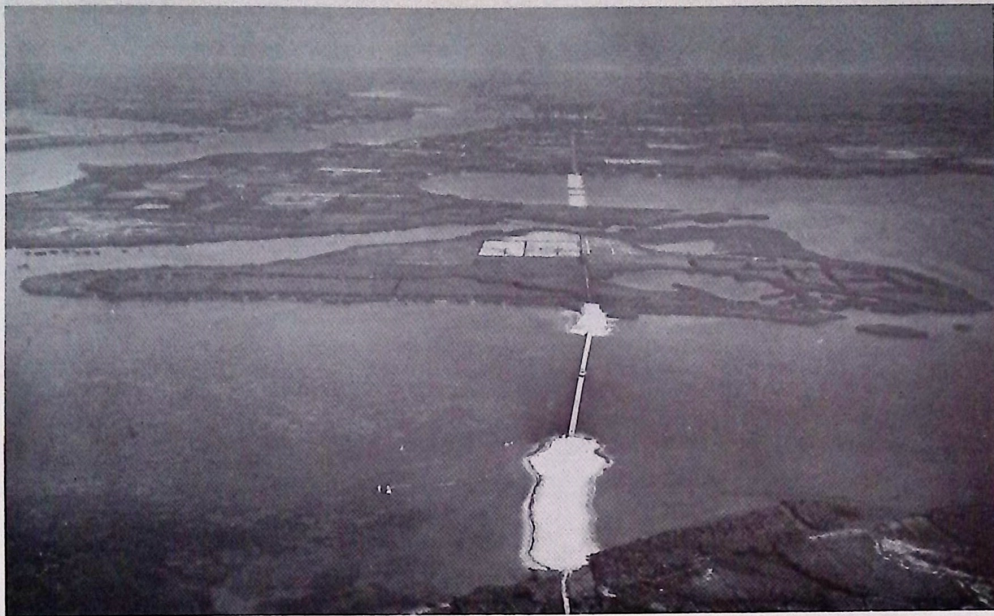
Looking the opposite way in 1958 after the Island to Longboat Key bridge was opened to traffic, and the present Coquina Beach had been developed. Both new bridges from the mainland to the Island are in clear view.



North end of the Island in early 1950s.



Pet feeding time on Anna Maria Island. Gawain Leon feeds a very young pelican he found floundering in the Bay after a storm. This is just one of the many unusual pets that can be found on the Island.



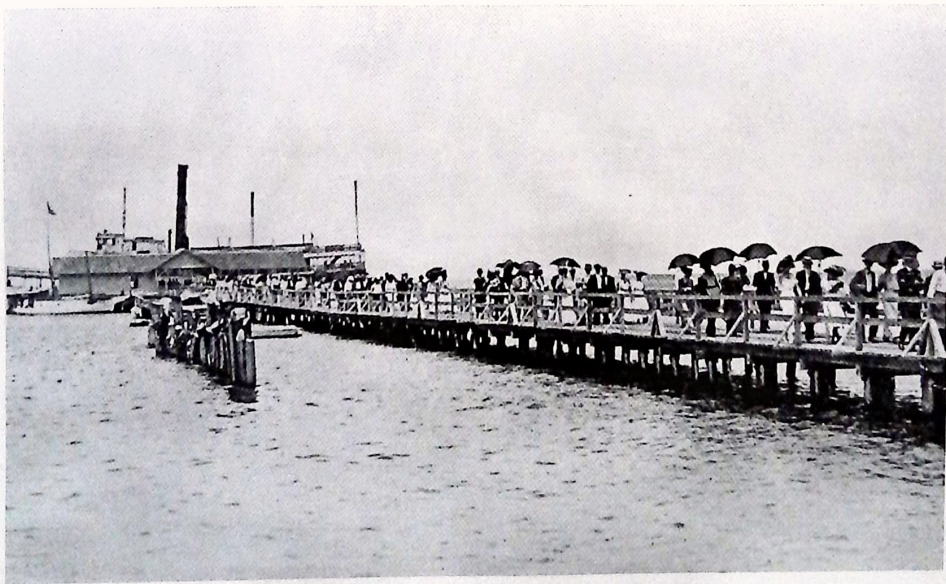
Anna Maria Island bridge in 1957, while causeway was under construction across Palma Sola Bay, Perico Island, and Anna Maria Sound.



South end of Bradenton Beach with good view of the old Cortez Bridge and the new bridge under construction.



The year was 1933 and the place was Bradenton Beach. It must have been a holiday, judging from all of the people on the beach who were fully dressed. This wide expanse of beach with no rock breakwaters, jetties or seawalls was in the vicinity of what is now the Moose Lodge. Note diving tower in the background.



Exodus from steamship which can be seen in the background behind Anna Maria Pier.



An Anna Maria landmark — the Anchorage, which stood for many years at the southwest corner of Pine Avenue and Bay Boulevard. The building, which has been torn down, is pictured about 1950.



85 Bridge Street in Bradenton Beach in 1947, when the street served as the Island's principal business district and the main artery to the only bridge to and from the Island.



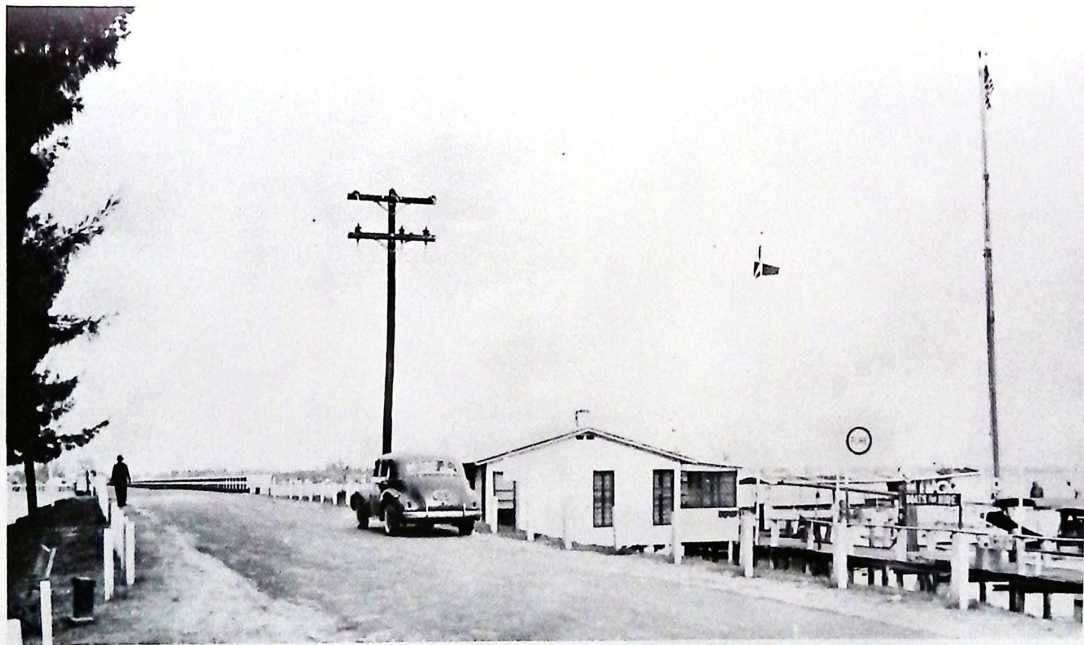
The Anna Maria Post Office in the early 1950s before the present post office plaza was built.

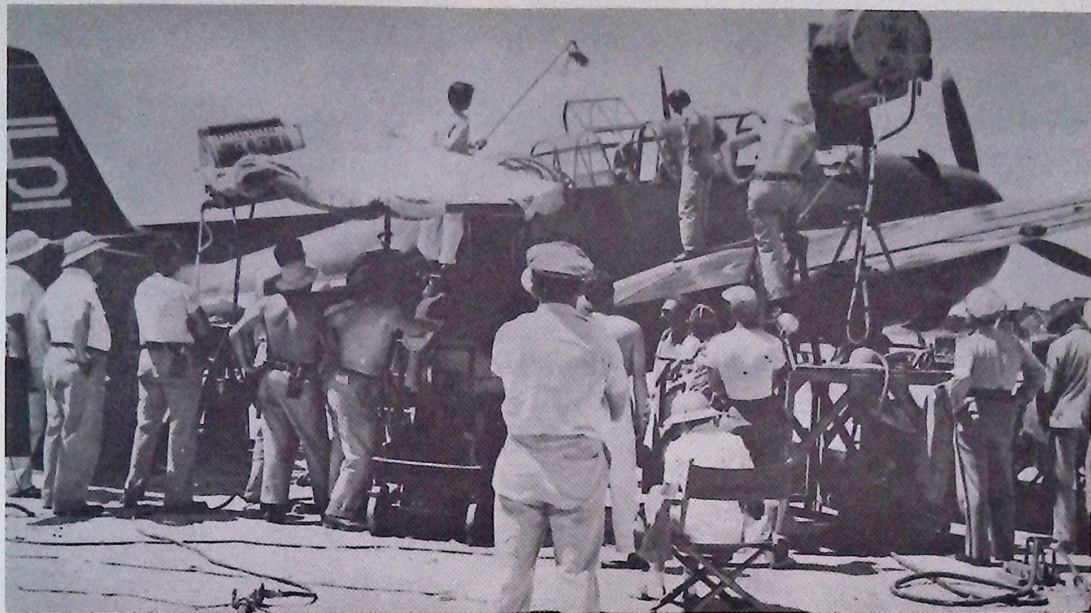


Spectacular blaze — Pete Reynard's Yacht Club at the height of the fire in 1965, which destroyed much of the popular restaurant. After the fire the building was restored and enlarged.



Cortez fishermen pulling in their nets off Anna Maria in Bay Front Park.





When Hollywood came to Anna Maria Island soon after World War II. Picture shows preparation for filming of "On An Island With You," which starred Esther Williams, Ricardo Montalban and Peter Lawford. Site of the film taking was the former Holmes Beach Airport.



Looking north on the Island in 1959.



"Before" picture of Key Royale in the early 1950s.

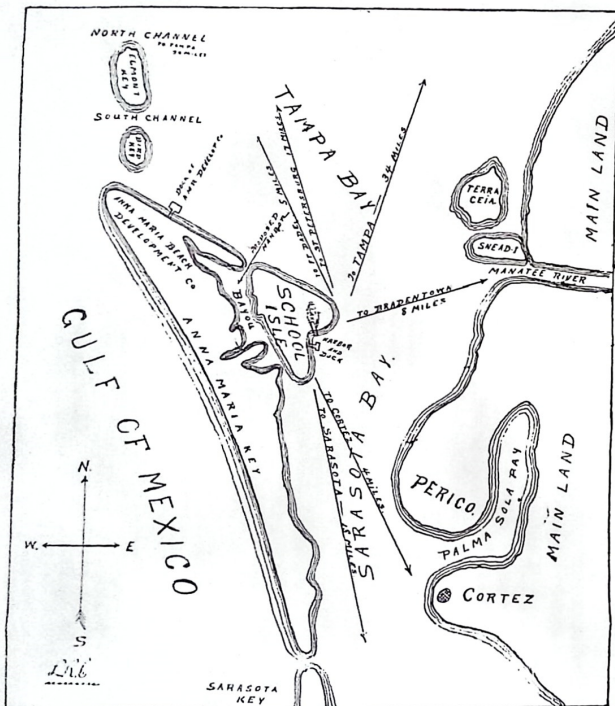


After — Key Royale during development of the residential island. At the top right of the picture is Anna Maria Yacht Club.

SCHOOL ISLAND

on the West Coast of Florida

The Centre of All the Best Hotels and Resorts on the West Coast. One Hundred and Twenty-five Acres of Island Land. Overlooking the Beautiful Sarasota and Tampa Bays, Protected from the Gulf of Mexico by Anna Maria Key. Suitable for Yacht Club. Magnificent for Southern Home. Desirable for Sub-Division. Unsurpassed for Hotel or Sanitarium. Accessible. Beautiful. Private.



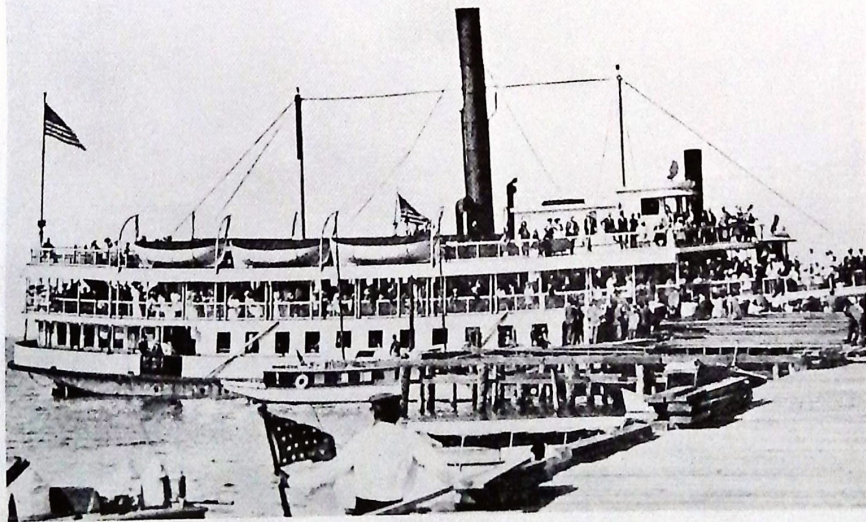
Tropical Trees
Beautiful Lake
Natural Harbor

Over two Miles Water Front
Fine Hammock Trucking Land
Easy Facilities to Main Land

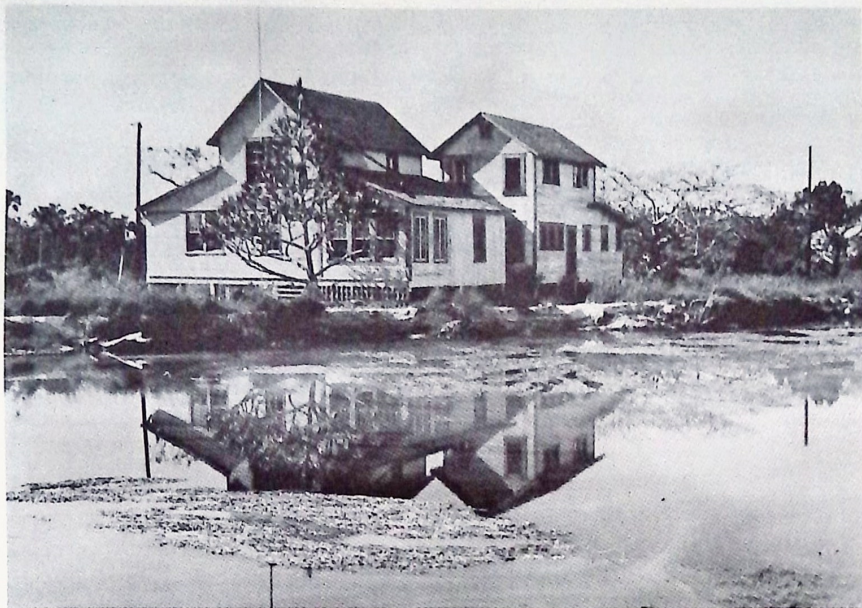
THIS PROPERTY IS NOW FOR SALE

If interested in Florida, its Climate, Fishing, Yachting, or its investment possibilities, it will pay you to investigate the above offering. For prices, terms, or other information, write or call on

When Key Royale (School Island on the map) was for sale. Out-of-proportion map offers present day Key Royale as "125 acres" suitable for yacht club or subdivision, which it eventually turned out to be.



Steamer "Favorite" while docked at Anna Maria City Pier, early 1900s. Apparently it was a holiday as the boat is loaded with several hundred people, many of whom will get off at the pier and visit the Island.



Sportsman's Harbor in Holmes Beach in 1950.



South end of Anna Maria Island in the early 1950s; North end of Longboat Key; the beginning of Beer Can Island on the right and Coffee Key on left. Most of the part of the Island pictured is now Coquina Beach.



Aerial view of Anna Maria in 1946, showing relatively little development except along the Gulf beach. Old Anna Maria City Pier was much in evidence but picture was taken before Rod & Reel Pier was built.



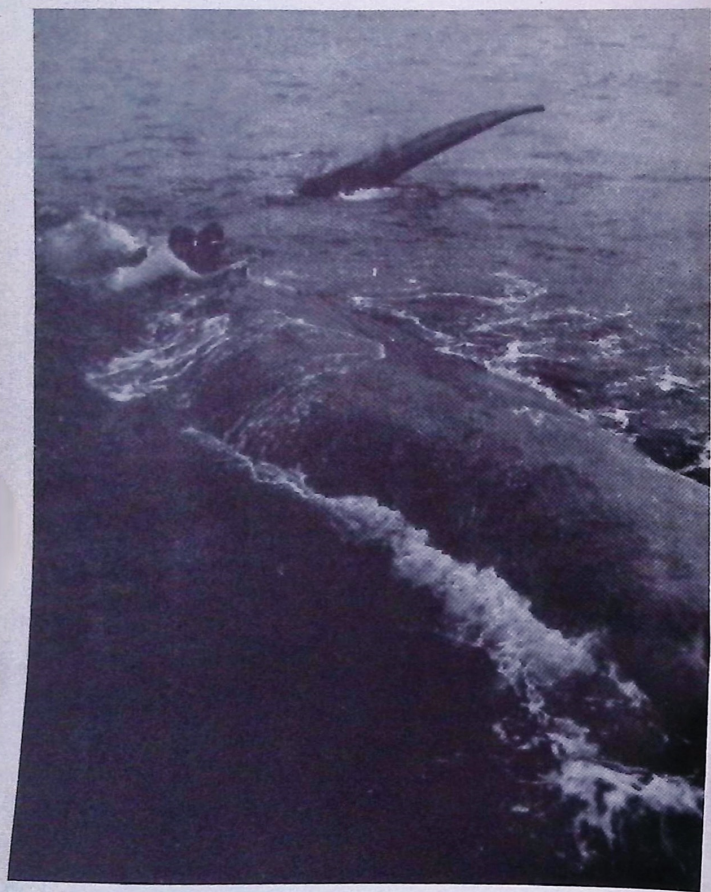
Aerial view taken from approximately the same spot over the north end of the Island. This shows development in Anna Maria City and Holmes Beach. Note development of Key Royale, appearance of Rod & Reel Pier, Manatee and Cortez Bridges.



An excellent aerial view of the entire Island and the north end of Longboat Key taken in the late 1950s.



Born here on Anna Maria Island — “Slick” the oily bird, brain child of Cartoonist Jack Egan, has become something of a mascot figure on Anna Maria Island.



BACK COVER:

Rod & Reel Pier has been written up in Field And Stream and several other national sportsmen's magazines for a number of world record catches, the jaws of one of which are in the picture. Frank's famous fantastic fish fables also have come from this pier. Frank Cavendish (pictured) is owner and operator of the pier, which has recently been decorated with some beautiful hand painted fish by Island artist Bob Sullivan; two of these are in the photo. Frank calls his parking lot Cavendish Square and in his spare time tends to injured birds.

On the left is one of the most fantastic fish stories to hit the Island in a long time. A 48 foot sperm whale was beaching itself on the north end of the Island. It was really unbelievable, and it was thought at first that Frank was at it again. However as you can see by this picture, an excellent shot by Don Moore, that it was the real thing.

